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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/612,575	07/02/2003	William A. Montemer	ICHGP006	4267
21912	7590	11/05/2008		
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CUPERTINO, CA 95014				
EXAMINER				
MYINT, DENNIS Y				
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
2162				
MAIL DATE		DELIVERY MODE		
11/05/2008		PAPER		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/612,575

Applicant(s)

MONTEMER, WILLIAM A.

Examiner

DENNIS MYINT

Art Unit

2162

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 08/08/2008.
2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 2-19 and 22 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
6) ☒ Claim(s) 2-19 and 22 is/are rejected.
7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/CDC)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____

- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

1. This communication is responsive to Applicant's Amendment, filed on August 8, 2008.
2. The amendment filed on August 8, 2008, has been received and entered. Claims 2-19 and 22 are currently pending in this application. Claims 2 and 17 were amended. Claims 2 and 17 are independent claims. **This office action is made final.**

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.
 4. Claims 2-5, 17-18, and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cheung et al. (hereinafter "Cheung", U.S. Patent Application Publication Number 2002/0169760) in view of Carr JR. et al., (hereinafter "Carr", U.S. Patent Application Publication Number 2002/0152099).
- Referring to claim 2, Cheung is directed to a method and teaches the limitations:

"receiving one or more bid amounts for a keyword, wherein each bid amount is associated with a listing" (Cheung, Paragraph 0025, Paragraph 0104, and Paragraphs 0091-0093);

"returning one or more listings responsive to a query associated with the keyword, wherein the listings are organized in an order associated with the respective bid amounts of the responsive listings" (Cheung, Paragraphs 0028 and 0106) ;

"receiving an indication that a selected listing included in the responsive listings has been selected" (Cheung, Paragraphs 0104-0105);

"crediting atomically to a referral service associated with the selected listing" (Cheung, Paragraph 0025, i.e., *the concept of a bid which corresponds to economic value which the advertiser will give when network location associated with the advertiser is referred to a searcher in response to a query from the searcher*; Paragraph 0028, i.e., *Search listings include one more of a search term and a bid/desired rank associated with the search term*; Paragraph 0118, i.e., *payment type*; and Paragraphs 00240-0248, i.e., *end procedure*; Particularly note that "network locations associated with the advertiser, which is referred to a searcher (user) in response to a query from the searcher (user), maps to "a referral service" of the claimed invention) "using web services" (Cheung, paragraph 0084, i.e., *"The block diagram of FIG. 1 therefore shows a distributed system 10 comprising a plurality of client computers 12, a plurality of advertiser web servers 14, an account management server 22, and a search engine web server 24, all of which are connected to a network 20. The network 20 will be hereinafter generally referred to as the Internet. Although the*

system and method of the present invention is specifically useful for the Internet, it should be understood that the client computers 12, advertiser web servers 14, account management server 22, and search engine web server 24 may be connected together through one of a number of different types of networks. Such networks may include local area networks (LANs), other wide area networks (WANs), and regional networks accessed over telephone lines, such as commercial information services. The client and server processes may even comprise different programs executing simultaneously on a single computer");

*"wherein returning one or more listings responsive to the query includes receiving from each of one or more listing sources include in a plurality of listing sources a corresponding set of one or more lists responsive to the query" (Cheung, Figure 5: SEARCH LISTING 340, 344, BID AMOUNT 358, and ADVERTISING INFORMATION 330; Cheung, Paragraph, 0103, i.e., The advertising information section 330 contains information needed to conduct the online bidding process of the present invention, wherein a position is determined for a web site description and hyperlink within a **search result list generated by a search engine**. The advertising data 330 for each user account 300 may be organized as **zero or more** subaccounts 340. **Each subaccount 340 comprises at least one search listing 344**; Cheung, Paragraph 0103, i.e., **Each search listing corresponds to a bid on a search term**. An advertiser may utilize subaccounts to organize multiple bids on multiple search terms, or to organize bids for multiple web sites) and "for each listing, a corresponding bid amount" (Cheung, Paragraph 0104, The search listing 344 corresponds to a **search term/bid***

pairing and contains key information to conduct the online competitive bidding process. Preferably, each search listing comprises the following information: search term 352, web site description 354, URL 356, bid amount 358, and a title 360. The search term 352 comprises one or more keywords which may be common words in English (or any other language). Each keyword in turn comprises a character string).

Cheung does not explicitly disclose the limitation:

"a portion of a bid amount received from an advertiser for the selected listing" .

Carr teaches the limitation:

"a portion of a bid amount received from an advertiser for the selected listing (Carr, Paragraph 0010, i.e., a *referral by an existing member entity, a referral from a third party vendor, a physical inspection of a particular market or submarket to identify one or more qualified commercial office buildings.....* (advertiser maps to the plurality of independently owned commercial office buildings in Paragraph 0009)); Carr, Paragraphs 0009, Paragraph 0010, Paragraph 0020, and Paragraph 0034).

Carr teaches a method, which aggregates the plurality of independently, owned commercial office buildings under single brand identity and markets the plurality of independently commercial office buildings on a regional and nationwide basis (Paragraph 0009). Carr also teaches that *these vendors will be required to pay the ACME Office business network annual marketing fees* (advertising fee is inherent in marketing fees) or *other associated revenues* (Paragraph 0034). Carr additionally discloses in Paragraph 0034 that *Examples of the types revenue enhancement opportunities that ACME official would enter into include advertising and distribution*

channel alliances. Even further more, Carr teaches in the same paragraph that *Each alliance negotiated by ACME Office for the benefit of its plurality of members entities typically would include **an allocation of some portion of the revenues** generated by the vendor from each participating member entity's office buildings to ACME Office.*

At the time the invention was made, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to modify the method of Cheung, which teaches automatically crediting to a referral service using web services (i.e., Cheung, paragraph 0084, i.e., **a distributed system 10 comprising a plurality of client computers 12, a plurality of advertiser web servers 14, an account management server 22**), to add the feature of crediting only a portion of a bid amount received from an advertiser for the selected listing, which is taught by Carr, so that the combined method would comprise automatically crediting to an entity that received a corresponding bid amount of the selected listing from an advertiser, a portion less than the full amount of the corresponding selected listing bid amount, using web services. One would have been motivated to do so in order because revenue sharing among good/services providers by pooling goods and services generate more revenue for each service provider than without revenue sharing, is a well known business practice.

Claim 17 is essentially the same as claim 2 except that it set forth the claimed invention as a system rather than a method and rejected for the same reasons as applied hereinabove.

Referring to claim 3, Cheung in view of Carr teaches the limitation:

“further comprising crediting to a listing source that returned the local business listings responsive to the query a portion less than the full amount of the corresponding selected listing bid amount” (Cheung, Paragraph 0025, i.e., *the concept of a bid which corresponds to economic value which the advertiser will give when network location associated with the advertiser is referred to a searcher in response to a query from the searcher*; Paragraph 0028, i.e., *Search listings include one more of a search term and a bid/desired rank associated with the search term*; Carr, Paragraphs 0009-0010 and Paragraph 0034). Carr teaches revenue sharing, said revenue having been derived from advertising/marketing and distributed to a third party, which made a referral. Particularly note Paragraph 0009-0010.

Claim 18 is essentially the same as claim 3 except that it set forth the claimed invention as a system rather than a method and rejected for the same reasons as applied hereinabove.

Referring to claim 4, Cheung in view of Carr teaches the limitation:

“wherein addition of the portion credited to the referral service and the portion credited to the provider equals the full amount of the corresponding selected listing bid amount” (Cheung, Paragraph 0025 in view of Carr, Paragraph 0009-010 and Paragraph 0034).

Referring to claim 5, Cheung in view of Carr teaches the limitation:

"wherein the listing is one or more of the following: a directory assistance listing and a local business listing" (Cheung, Paragraph 0014-0015 and 0091).

Referring to claim 22, Cheung in view of Carr teaches the limitations:

"wherein the referral service is a listing source" (Cheung, Paragraph 0025).

5. Claims 6-7 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cheung in view of Carr and further in view of Reichardt et al. (hereinafter "Reichardt", U.S. Patent Application Publication Number 2002/0124255).

Referring to claim 6, Cheung in view of Carr does not explicitly teach the limitation: "wherein at least one of the one or more bid amounts is based at least in part on a time value".

Reichardt teaches the limitation: "wherein at least one of the one or more bid amounts is based at least in part on a time value" (Paragraph 0086 and 0090).

At the time the invention was made, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to add the feature of listings based on time-slots as taught by Reichardt to the method of Cheung in view of Carr so that in the resultant method bid amount for listings will be based on a time value. One would have been motivated to do so in order to enhance advertising and merchandising opportunities (Reichardt, Paragraph 0009).

Claim 19 is essentially the same as claim 6 except that it set forth the claimed invention as a system rather than a method and rejected for the same reasons as applied hereinabove.

Referring to claim 7, Cheung in view of Carr and further in view of Reichardt teaches the limitation:

"wherein the time value is associated with a time at which a corresponding listing is selected" (Reichardt, Paragraph 0086 and 0090).

6. Claim 8-10, 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cheung in view of Carr and further in view of Bedingfield SR (hereinafter "Bedingfield", U.S. Patent Application Publication Number 2004/0260604).

Referring to claim 8, Cheung in view of Carr does not explicitly disclose the limitation: "wherein at least one of the one or more bid amounts is based at least in part on a distance value".

Bedingfield teaches the limitation:

"wherein at least one of the one or more bid amounts is based at least in part on a distance value" (Figure 5, Paragraph 0008-0009 and 0021, i.e. *The selected one or more advertiser entries may be presented based on at least in part on the user measured location information and the advertiser measured location information of the selected one or more advertiser entries.*).

At the time the invention was made, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to add the feature of listings based on distances as taught by Bedingfield to the method of Cheung in view of Carr so that the resultant method would also comprise bid amounts which are based at least in part on a distance value. One would have been motivated to do so in order to provide location-based services (Bedingfield, Paragraph 0005).

Referring to claim 9, Cheung in view of Carr and further in view of Bedingfield teaches the limitation:

"wherein the distance value is associated with the distance between a location associated with a listing and a location associated with one or more of the following: the query, a user of the query, and the listing source" (Bedingfield, Figure 5, Paragraph 0008-0009 and 0021, i.e. *The selected one or more advertiser entries may be presented based on at least in part on the user measured location information and the advertiser measured location information of the selected one or more advertiser entries*; Cheung, Paragraph 0025).

Referring to claim 10, Cheung in view of Carr and further in view of Bedingfield teaches the limitation:

"wherein the listings are responsive to the query only if the listings are associated with a location within a distance value from a location associated with one or more of

the following: the query, a user of the query, and the provider" (Bedingfield, Paragraphs 0021-0025; Cheung Paragraph 0025).

Referring claim 14, Cheung in view of Carr and further in view of Bedingfield is directed to the limitation:

"wherein query is associated with an interactive voice response system"
(Bedingfield, Paragraph 0004).

7. Claim 11-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cheung in view of Carr and further in view of Ponte (U.S. Patent Number 7047242).

Referring to claim 11, Cheung in view of Carr teaches "listing sources" (Cheung, Paragraph 0025). Cheung in view of Carr does not explicitly teach the limitation: "wherein receiving the one or more bid amounts for the keyword includes synchronizing a shared database with one or more databases of one or more listing sources from which the one or bid amounts are received."

Ponte teaches the limitation:

"wherein receiving the one or more bid amounts for the keyword includes synchronizing a shared database with one or more databases of one or more listing sources from which the one or bid amounts are received" (Ponte, Figure 4, Column 5 Line 59 through Column 6 Line 41, Figure 31, Column 57 Lines 7-17, and Column 60 Lines 51-56).

At the time the invention was made, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to add the feature of a shared database which is connected to one or more databases for business listings as taught by Ponte to the method of Cheung in view of Carr so that the resultant method would comprise receiving the one or more bid amounts for the keyword includes synchronizing a shared database with one or more databases of one or more entities from which the one or bid amounts are received. One would have been motivated to do so in order to target a wide range of users who may be interested in a wide range of goods and services (Ponte, Column 1 Lines 3-36).

Referring to claim 12, Official Note is taken that the concept of synchronizing databases periodically is notoriously well known in the art.

Referring to claim 13, Ponte is direct to the limitation:

"wherein the databases of listing sources includes at least two databases of different formats that synchronize with the same shared-database" (Cheung Paragraph 0025 in view of Ponte, Figure 4).

8. Claim 15-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cheung in view of Carr and further in view of Tibbetts (U.S. Patent Number 6158044).

Referring to claim 15, Cheung in view of Carr teaches the limitation "referral service" (Cheung Paragraph 0025). Cheung in view of Carr does not explicitly teach the

limitation: "wherein crediting to the referral service includes placing transaction data in a queue".

Tibbetts teaches the limitation:

"wherein crediting to the referral service includes placing transaction data in a queue" (Tibbetts Column 10 Lines 13-16).

At the time the invention was made, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to add the feature of transaction queuing as taught by Tibbetts to the method of Cheung in view of Carr so that the resultant method would comprise transaction queuing. One would have been motivated to do so simply because transaction queuing allows sequential execution, which is well known in the art.

Referring to claim 16, Cheung in view of Carr and further in view of Tibbetts teaches the limitation:

"wherein the transaction data is associated with a metadata that can be used to recover the crediting from a failure" (Tibbetts, Column 11 Line 20 through Column 12 Line 16 and Column 25 Lines 10-20).

Response to Arguments

9. Applicant's arguments filed on August 8, 2008, have been considered but are not persuasive.

Applicant argued that "Carr does not teach "crediting automatically to a referral service associated with the selected listing a portion of a bid amount received from an advertiser for the selected listing using web services" (emphasis added) as recited in the amended claim 2, because an automated way for sharing advertising revenues in distributed enhanced directory assistance services is not the same as splitting costs between commercial office buildings. Support for the amendment to claim 2 may be found, without limitation, in the above-captioned application in paragraphs 46- 53, and Figures 4, 5, and 6. As such, claim 2 is believed to be allowable " (Applicant's argument, page 6 fourth paragraph).

Examiner respectfully disagrees all of the allegations as argued. Examiner, in his previous office action, gave detail explanation of claimed limitation and pointed out exact locations in the cited prior art. Examiner is entitled to give claim limitations their broadest reasonable interpretation in light of the specification. See MPEP 2111 [R-1] Interpretation of Claims-Broadest Reasonable Interpretation.

During patent examination, the pending claims must be 'given the broadest reasonable interpretation consistent with the specification.' Applicant always has the opportunity to amend the claims during prosecution and broad interpretation by the examiner reduces the possibility that the claim, once issued, will be interpreted more broadly than is justified. In re Prater, 162 USPQ 541,550-51 (CCPA 1969).

In response it is pointed out that claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 over Cheung in view of Carr. As such, the claim is rejected in view of the combination of Cheung and Carr. The limitations of claim 2 are taught by the combination as follows. Cheung teaches "crediting atomically to a referral service associated with the selected listing" (Cheung, Paragraph 0025, i.e., *the concept of a bid which corresponds to economic value which the advertiser will give when network location associated with the advertiser is referred to a searcher in response to a query from the searcher*; Paragraph 0028, i.e., *Search listings include one more of a search term and a bid/desired rank associated with the search term*; Paragraph 0118, i.e., *payment type*; and Paragraphs 00240-0248, i.e., *end procedure*; Particularly note that "network locations associated with the advertiser, which is referred to a searcher (user) in response to a query from the searcher (user), maps to "a referral service" of the claimed invention) "using web services" (Cheung, paragraph 0084, i.e., *"The block diagram of FIG. 1 therefore shows a distributed system 10 comprising a plurality of client computers 12, a plurality of advertiser web servers 14, an account management server 22, and a search engine web server 24, all of which are connected to a network 20. The network 20 will be hereinafter generally referred to as the Internet. Although the system and method of the present invention is specifically useful for the Internet, it should be understood that the client computers 12, advertiser web servers 14, account management server 22, and search engine web server 24 may be connected together through one of a number of different types of networks. Such networks may include local area networks (LANs), other wide area networks (WANs), and regional networks*

*accessed over telephone lines, such as commercial information services. The client and server processes may even comprise different programs executing simultaneously on a single computer". Carr teaches crediting "'a portion of a bid amount received from an advertiser for the selected listing (Carr, Paragraph 0010, i.e., a referral by an existing member entity, **a referral from a third party vendor**, a physical inspection of a particular market or submarket to identify one or more qualified commercial office buildings..... (advertiser maps to the plurality of independently owned commercial office buildings in Paragraph 0009)); Carr, Paragraphs 0009, Paragraph 0010, Paragraph 0020, and Paragraph 0034). At the time the invention was made, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to modify the method of Cheung, which teaches automatically crediting to a referral service using web services (i.e., Cheung, paragraph 0084, i.e., **a distributed system 10 comprising a plurality of client computers 12, a plurality of advertiser web servers 14, an account management server 22**), to add the feature of crediting only a portion of a bid amount received from an advertiser for the selected listing, which is taught by Carr, so that the combined method would comprise automatically crediting to an entity that received a corresponding bid amount of the selected listing from an advertiser, a portion less than the full amount of the corresponding selected listing bid amount, using web services. One would have been motivated to do so in order because revenue sharing among good/services providers by pooling goods and services generate more revenue for each service provider than without revenue sharing, is a well known business practice.*

Additionally, Applicant argued that *claims 2-16 depend from claim 2 and are*

believed to be allowable for the same reasons described above (Applicant's argument, page 6 fifth paragraph). Applicant also argued that "*claim 17 recites systems for carrying out the methods of claim2*" (Applicant's argument, page 6 sixth paragraph). Applicant argued that "*claims 18-19 depend from claim 17 and are believed to be allowable for the same reasons described above*" (Applicant's argument, page 6 last paragraph).

In response, it is pointed out that since Cheung in view of Carr teaches each and every limitation of claim 2 and claim 2 is not allowable just as claim 17 is not allowable.

All dependent claims of claims 2 and 17 are obvious over respective prior art as presented above and are not allowable.

In view of the above, the examiner contends that all limitations as recited in the claims have been addressed in this Action. For the above reasons, Examiner believed that rejections of the last Office Action and Current Office Action are proper.

Conclusion

10. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Contact Information

11. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Dennis Myint whose telephone number is (571) 272-5629. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30 AM - 5:30 PM Monday-Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Breene can be reached on (571) 272-4107. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-5629.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

/Dennis Myint/
Examiner, Art Unit 2162

/John Breene/

Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2162